

HAVA Accessibility Requirements

Voting Machines

- HAVA requires **all polling places be equipped with at least one voting device that will allow disabled voters to cast a ballot privately and independently in their home precinct.** In all cases, these devices **contain a headset and allows for the ballot to be read to the voter.** This ensures visually impaired voters can cast a ballot in secret and without assistance from family, friends, or poll workers. Other components to these voting systems allow physically impaired to vote more easily than in past elections.
- **Indiana's 92 counties will all have added accessible voting equipment in time for Indiana's first federal election following January 1, 2006,** as required by HAVA and conforming state statutes. In **86 Indiana counties,** this solution is in the form of a **Direct Record Electronic (DRE) voting system.** A DRE voting system records votes electronically and voter casts votes by pushing either a button designated for their candidate of choice on a computer screen, or by touching the screen itself.
- In the remaining **6 counties,** there is a device called the **AutoMark** which works in a similar way to DRE machines, the difference is that **the system marks a paper ballot that can then be fed into an optical scan reader for tabulation** like every other vote cast in the precinct (assuming the primary voting system is an optical scan system, as is the case with these 6 counties). Optical Scan voting systems require the voter to complete a paper ballot. The ballot is then fed into a reader, and votes are tabulated.
- **Indiana has reimbursed counties over \$25 million for accessible voting equipment for disabled voters.**

Polling Place Accessibility

- In addition to accessible voting equipment, **HAVA requires that all polling places be made fully accessible for elderly and disabled voters.** Indiana's approach to address these concerns was one of a partnership between election administrators and the disabilities community. For a county to be eligible to receive HAVA funds for voting machine reimbursements, the county had to pass resolutions affirming the goal of fully accessible polling places and establishing an advisory board on polling place accessibility in the county.
- Additionally, the counties worked with volunteers from the **Count Us IN project** of the **Governor's Planning Council for People With Disabilities to survey each polling place in the state on either the 2003 Municipal Election, 2004 Primary Election, or the 2004 General Election.** This survey data was compiled and shared with each county's chief election official and the body responsible for designating polling places before an election
- Throughout 2004, 2005, and into 2006, counties worked with service organizations, public and private facilities, and the state to **upgrade their polling locations.** In some cases, long time polling places were moved to a more accessible facility. Fully accessible schools were

designated more often and more than one precinct was placed in the same location. Counties have done an admirable job meeting their polling place accessibility goals.

Grievance Procedure

- Per HAVA, **a grievance procedure has been added to the election process that allows individuals who feel that accessibility goals have not been met at their polling place to formally issue a complaint.** Through this procedure, the state will review the complaint, and attempt to mediate the situation by working with the concerned parties and counties.

Absentee Voting

- Disabled and elderly voters are eligible under Indiana's absentee laws to request an absentee ballot through the mail or to vote by traveling board. In both instances, the voter votes at their residence.
- **No voter may be denied the right to vote because of any mental, physical, or sensory limitation.**

Assisting Disabled Voters

A voter may be assisted in the voting booth ONLY IF:

1. The voter has a disability (permanent or temporary) or is unable to read or write the English language *AND*
2. The voter, **before entering the voting booth**, requests assistance.

The following individuals may assist a voter, if requested to do so:

1. The voter may designate anyone to assist them, including a relative, or friend. However, a voter may NOT designate the voter's employer, an officer of the voter's union, or a union representative.
 2. If the voter requests assistance but does not designate someone else to help them, BOTH judges must accompany the voter into the voting booth to assist the voter.
- A person providing assistance to a voter (including the judges) **must complete the Affidavit of Voter Assistance at the Polls (PRE-3) BEFORE** entering the voting booth to assist a voter.